

Remarks

Claims 1-5, 7-8, 12-17, and 19-31 are pending. Claim 18 was canceled. Amendment entry is respectfully requested. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration is requested.

The Rejections

Claims 1-2, 12-19, 21-23, and 28-31 were rejected as anticipated pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Imai (US 4,871,162).

Claims 1-5, 7-8, 12-17, and 19-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beskitt (US 6,302,393) in view of Imai.

What Imai Does Not Teach

Claim 1

- Relied upon element (13a) does not constitute a second stripper.

As previously discussed, one skilled in the art understands what constitutes a sheet stripper that can "provide resistance" to sheet movement. Conversely, Imai teaches that the rings (13a) freely ride on the shaft (11) via the bearings (13b). These bearings (13b) are "rotatably mounted on the shaft 11" (col. 2, lines 63-65). As a result of the rings (13a) being able to freely rotate, they provide no resistance to sheet movement.

- Relied upon element (12) likewise does not constitute a second stripper.

In none of Imai's stages (P1, P2) does the ring (12) provide resistance to sheet movement. During stage P1 (Figure 4) the ring (12) is positioned away from the sheet (S). Likewise, no resistance is provided in stage P2 (Figure 6). Nor has the Office explained how the ring (12) could provide stripping resistance when there is no opposed aligned structure into which the ring (12) could press the sheet against.

- Claim 1 has been amended in order to advance prosecution.

Claim 1 has been amended to include features from other claims. For example, claim 1 also includes features related to a second stripping portion moved out of contact with a sheet engaging portion (14, 31); stripping portions comprising roll surfaces (18); and the roll surfaces remaining stationary as the sheet moves (18). Imai also does not teach these features.

Claim 21

- Imai does not teach "receiving a stack" in a "chute" of "an automated banking machine" (step a). At best, Imai refers to a "cash dispenser" (col. 1, line 13).
- As previously discussed (claim 1), the relied upon elements (13a and 12) cannot constitute a second stripper that provides resistance.
- Relied upon element (12) is not "in opposed alignment with a picking member", and thus cannot constitute a second stripper.
- Neither relied upon element (13a or 12) is "in biased abutting engagement" with a picking member, and thus cannot constitute a second stripper.

Claim 28

- Relied upon belt (18) is not a roller, and thus cannot constitute a non-contact sheet stripper roller.
- As previously discussed (claim 1), the relied upon elements (13a and 12) cannot constitute a contact sheet stripper roller because they provide no resistance.
- Even if it were somehow possible (which it isn't) for Imai to teach both a non-contact sheet stripper roller and a contact sheet stripper roller, he still would not teach a stripping resistance (via a non-contact roller) occurring "prior to" another stripping resistance (via a contact roller). Nor would Imai's structure allow such timing.

The Claims Are Not Obvious

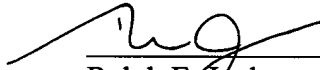
As previously discussed, Imai does not teach the recited features and relationships. It follows that Imai cannot equip Beskitt with the recited features and relationships. The Office can't rely upon Imai to alleviate the admitted and previously noted deficiencies in Beskitt. The Office has not established a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance.

The undersigned is willing to discuss any aspect of the Application by phone at the Office's convenience.

Respectfully submitted,



Ralph E. Locke Reg. No. 31,029
WALKER & JOCKE
231 South Broadway
Medina, Ohio 44256
(330) 721-0000